

Safety & Health Update

May 2015

Division of Workers' Compensation

This monthly e-newsletter provides updates on the Workplace Safety Programs of the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC). Both subscribers and non-subscribers of workers' compensation insurance are eligible for these services.

Governor Proclaims May 2015 Occupational Safety and Health Month

Governor Greg Abbott has proclaimed May 2015 as Occupational Safety and Health Month to encourage Texans to "recognize the importance of occupational safety and health practices to the well-being of every employee in Texas and to our vibrant economy." The full text of the governor's proclamation is located on the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/summithome.html>.

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Transportation Safety Information

Safe Driving Policies

According to *Guidelines for Employers to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crashes*, published by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS), every 12 minutes someone dies in a motor vehicle crash, every 10 seconds an injury occurs and every five seconds a crash occurs. Many of these incidents occur



Attribution: gen gibson

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Safety Tips

Electrical Cord Safety and Hurricane Preparedness

May is National Electrical Safety Month. Electricity is a great benefit to everyone. But without precautions it can cause property damage, injury or even death. Here are some tips for safe use.

- Inspect power cords frequently. Look for torn insulation or crushed



Attribution: acaius

(Continued on [page 4](#))

Transportation Safety Information (cont.)

Safe Driving Policies (cont.)

during the workday or during the commute to and from work. Employers bear the cost for injuries that occur both on and off the job. Whether you manage a fleet of vehicles, oversee a mobile sales force or simply employ commuters, by implementing a driver safety program in the workplace you can greatly reduce the risks faced by your employees and their families while protecting your company's bottom line.

An effective driving accident prevention plan should specify the qualifications for employees who drive while on the job, and should include policy statements related to the various elements of the plan. Considerations for qualified drivers include valid Texas Driver License; minimum number of moving violation convictions on their driving records; and driving skills assessments, among others. Employers should consider qualifications for both commercial and non-commercial drivers, and specify those in their policies. Robust driving accident prevention plans should also have the following components:

- Senior management commitment and employee involvement;
- Written policies and procedures;
- Driver agreements;
- Motor vehicle record checks;
- Crash reporting and investigation;
- Vehicle selection, maintenance and inspection;
- Disciplinary action system;
- Driver training and communication; and
- Applicable regulations needed for compliance.

Employers can help protect their employees by educating them about safe driving practices. ▲

Download!

DWC Resources

The DWC offers the following free driving safety publication:

- *Highway Safety Program in the Workplace.*

This publication, available in both English and Spanish, can be downloaded from the agency website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/targtransrltd.html>, along with more than 30 other driving safety publications.

The DWC features a free occupational safety and health DVD loan library. Call 512-804-4620 for more information or visit the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/avcatalog.html>. DVDs on many driving dangers can be found under the following headings:

- *Driving Safety;*
- *Transportation Safety*
(includes safe operation of buses and vans); and
- *Trucking Safety* (covers professional trucking, both straight trucks and tractor trailers).

Other Resources

OSHA offers a number of work-related resources related to motor vehicle safety, including links to relevant standards and links to vehicle safety publications (including *Guidelines for Employers to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crashes*) on the agency website at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/motorvehiclesafety/index.html>.

NETS has published *NETS Comprehensive Guide to Road Safety*, available for download from its website at <http://www.trafficsafety.org>. The Comprehensive Guide offers sample policies for cell phone use and substance abuse in the appendices and is available in 21 languages.

The Texas Workforce Commission offers a sample driver policy as well as a policy for uninsurable drivers, located on its website at http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/efte/driver_policy.html and http://www.twc.state.tx.us/news/efte/uninsurable_drivers.html.

The National Safety Council (NSC), in association with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), offers a *Sample Defensive Driving Policy*, located at http://www.nsc.org/safety_road/Employer%20Traffic%20Safety/Pages/TexasAggressiveDriving.aspx. The NSC also

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Safety Tips (cont.)

Download!

Electric Cord Safety (cont.)

areas. If you find any, dispose of the cord; do not wrap it with tape. If the ground prong is missing from the plug, replace it with a new plug before using it again. Without the ground prong there is no way for the current to travel away from you in case of a short circuit.

- If a power cord has only two prongs, check the manufacturer's label and see if it is double insulated. If it is, one of the prongs will be wider than the other. Do not modify that prong because it must always plug into the same side of the outlet to maintain the same polarity and protect you against shock.
- When you unplug cords from an outlet, remember to pull on the plug, not the cable.
- Do not place power cords under rugs. If a strong demand for current is put on a cord, it heats up and could become a fire hazard.
- Never use extension cords as a permanent source of power for equipment.
- Do not route cords through doorways or any wall openings.
- Never staple cords to any surface.
- Do not allow electric cords to pass through water. If you must work in wet areas, use a portable GFCI outlet to prevent shock.
- Plugging many cords into a single outlet may cause too much power demand. Check the temperature of the cords with your hand. If a cord is too hot to touch for more than a few seconds, unplug it from the circuit. ▲

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DWC Resources

The DWC offers the following free safety publications related to electrical safety:

- *Electric Shock Take 5 for Safety*;
- *Electrical Safety*;
- *Electrical Safety for the Home Activity Book for Kids*; and
- *Electrical Safety Training Program*.

These publications can be downloaded from the agency website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/index.html>, along with many other safety publications.

The DWC features a free occupational safety and health DVD loan library. Call 512-804-4620 for more information or visit the DWC website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/avcatalog.html>. DVDs on electrical safety can be found under the Electrical Safety subject heading.

Other Resources

The Electrical Safety Foundation International provides information about National Electrical Safety Month, safety tips, and educational tools on its website at <http://www.esfi.org/>.

OSHA has created a Safety and Health Topics Pages for *Electrical Safety*, available on the OSHA website at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/electrical/index.html>, as well as *Electrical Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution Industry*, available at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/powergeneration/index.html>, and *Electrical Contractors Industry Safety*, available at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/electricalcontractors/index.html>.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) offers a number of resources such as facts, statistics, publications and educational materials on its *Electrical Safety* topics webpage, available on the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/electrical/>.

Safety Tips (cont.)

Hurricane Preparedness

May 24 – 30, 2015 is National Hurricane Preparedness Week.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a lack of hurricane awareness and preparation are common threads

among all major hurricane disasters. By knowing your vulnerability and what actions you should take, you can reduce the effects of a hurricane disaster.

Employers can use the following NOAA suggested topics during the week long observance to increase awareness among their employees:

Sunday, May 24:	Hurricane Basics
Monday, May 25:	Hurricane Hazards - Storm Surge
Tuesday, May 26:	Hurricane Hazards - Wind
Wednesday, May 27:	Hurricane Hazards - Inland Flooding
Thursday, May 28:	Forecast Process
Friday, May 29:	Get a Plan
Saturday, May 30:	After the Storm

NOAA offers links to informational videos on each of these topics in English and Spanish, as well as other educational materials, on its website at <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepare/>. ▲



Download!

DWC Resources

The DWC offers the following free safety publications related to hurricane and emergency preparedness as well as safety for recovery efforts and clean-up:

- *Emergency Action Plan Sample OSHA Written Program;*
- *Emergency Procedures for Employees with Disabilities in Office Occupations Resource Guide;*
- *Emergency Response Planning for Hazardous Materials;*
- *Hurricane Preparation FactSheet;*
- *Hurricane/Tornado Recovery Efforts and Clean-Up Hazards;*
- *Severe Weather Action Planning Safety Training Program;*
- *Tornado Safety - Take 5 for Safety;* and
- *Tree Trimming Safety Tips for Hurricane/Tornado.*

These publications can be downloaded from the agency website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/index.html>, along with many other safety publications.

The DWC features a free occupational safety and health DVD loan library. Call 512-804-4620 for more information or visit the DWC website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/avcatalog.html>. DVDs on electrical safety can be found under the *Weather Safety* and *Emergency Preparedness* subject headings.

Other Resources

NIOSH presents emergency response resources for storms, floods, hurricanes and typhoons on its website at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/flood.html>.

OSHA offers various resources on hurricane preparedness and response/recovery, including employer responsibilities on its website at <https://www.osha.gov/dts/weather/hurricane/index.html>.

The Texas State Fire Marshal's Office provides fire safety tips for hurricane season on its website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/fire/fmcanefiresafe.html>.

Texas Safety Summit

19th Annual Workplace Safety and Health Conference, May 19-21

EARLY REGISTRATION FEE EXTENDED UNTIL MAY 8

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) will host the 19th Annual Workplace Safety and Health Conference, the Texas Safety Summit from May 19-21, 2015 in Austin at the Doubletree Hotel Austin, located at 6505 IH-35 North.

The DWC is hosting the conference to help all employers reduce injuries and their associated costs through workplace safety and return-to-work programs. This conference is open to all segments of the Texas workforce, including small and large employers, public and private sector employers, and workers' compensation subscribers and non-subscribers.

Three optional pre-conference sessions entitled Workers' Compensation Essentials, Hazard Identification and Elimination, and Components of an Effective Safety Program will be offered 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and one optional pre-conference session hosted by the National Safety Council's *Our Driving Concern Texas Employer Traffic Safety Program* will be offered 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on May 19. These sessions are held concurrently and are free to attend with registration.

Additionally, the Texas Safety Summit will offer more than 25 breakout and general sessions covering a variety of workplace safety and health related topics such as effective safety management processes and systems, workplace violence prevention, hazardous materials and communication standards, transportation safety, regulatory compliance, and much more.

The Texas Safety Summit is a learning opportunity for all types of people in an array of industries who play a role in safeguarding Texas employees, such as office managers, human resources representatives, managers and supervisors, union safety representatives, safety committee representatives, risk and loss control managers, occupational safety or industrial hygiene professionals, and safety trainers. The registration fee for the conference is \$275 per person if registered by May 8, 2015, and \$300 per person if registered on or after May 9, 2015. Discounted rates are available for groups or



employers that send five or more participants. Texas State Technical College in Waco will provide Continuing Education Credits (CEUs). Attendees will be eligible to receive .1 CEU per hour of attendance on May 19, 20, and 21. ▲

Register!

For additional conference information, visit the DWC website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/summithome.html>, call 512-804-4610 or e-mail safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov.

Download!

Safe Driving Policies (cont.) Other Resources (cont.)

offers a *Cell Phone Policy Kit* that can be downloaded from its website at <http://www.nsc.org/learn/NSC-Initiatives/Pages/distracted-driving-employers-end-distracted-driving-with-cell-phone-policies.aspx>.

NHTSA has created a sample distracted driving policy that can be downloaded from its *Distraction.gov* website at <http://www.distraction.gov/take-action/employers.html>.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) offers a sample *Corporate Safety Belt Statement* as well as a sample *Company Safety Belt Policy*, and these are located on the FMCSA website at <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety/safety-belt/corporate-safety-belt-statement-sample> and <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety/safety-belt/company-safety-belt-policy-sample>.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) offers the following publications:

Work-Related Roadway Crashes: Prevention Strategies for Employers, located at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2004-136/>.

Work-Related Roadway Crashes: Challenges and Opportunities for Prevention, located at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2003-119/>.

Regional Safety Summits

Houston — June 17, 2015

**Lone Star College System
5000 Research Forest Drive, The Woodlands**

Corpus Christi — July 15, 2015

**Region 2 Education Service Center
209 N. Water Street**

The DWC is offering a series of Regional Safety Summits that provide affordable training and instruction on common causes of preventable injuries and fatalities in the workplace, as well as current and upcoming regulations in the occupational safety and health fields.

According to the most recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), contact with objects and equipment surpassed falls to become the second leading cause of occupational fatalities, while falls, slips and trips were the third leading cause of occupational fatalities in Texas in 2013. The Regional Safety Summits address these and other safety issues commonly encountered in the workplace. Attendees will be able to choose the sessions that are most valuable to them.

Session Descriptions

Elements of Effective Safety Programs

Effectively managing how you protect your employees at work is a key factor in reducing the frequency and severity of work-related injuries and illnesses and related costs. This session will provide attendees an understanding of the elements that are necessary to create an effective and comprehensive safety program in the workplace. The presentation will explore seven core components commonly found in effective safety programs; cover program best practices; and discuss the positive effects of implementation. (3 hours)



Session Options

Session Time	Option 1	Option 2
Morning	Components of an Effective Accident Prevention Program	OSHA Written Programs and Training Requirements
Afternoon	Requirements of a Comprehensive Hazard Communication Program	Walking and Working Surfaces, Exit Routes, and Emergency Action Plans

Requirements of a Comprehensive Hazard Communication Program

Exposure to hazardous chemicals in the workplace can cause or contribute to many serious health effects for employees. In addition, some chemicals may be safety hazards and have the potential to cause fires, explosions, and other serious accidents. A comprehensive hazard communication program will help employers and employees understand the effects of chemicals found in the workplace, how to prevent exposure, and what to do in an emergency if exposure does occur. Written hazard communication programs have specific requirements that must be met in order to comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) General Industry standards. This session will cover OSHA's requirements regarding materials inventory, labeling, safety data sheets, and employee training. An in-class exercise will provide attendees an example of the information and skills needed to conduct training in their own workplace that complies with OSHA's requirements. (3 hours)

OSHA Written Programs and Training Requirements

This session will review the various OSHA required and suggested written programs and training topics, including lockout-tagout, emergency action

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plans, and hearing conservation. Attendees will gain an understanding of when written programs must be implemented, what must be covered when conducting training, and the frequency with which training should occur. (3 hours)

Walking and Working Surfaces, Exit Routes, and Emergency Plans

Slips, trips and falls account for numerous workplace injuries every year. Maintaining clean, dry and uncluttered work environments can help prevent many of these incidents from occurring. Part one of this session will explain OSHA's General Industry standards pertaining to walking and working surfaces, including requirements for floor and wall openings, loading docks, stairways and ladders, and general housekeeping.

Part two of this session will cover the OSHA requirements for exit routes, emergency action plans and fire prevention plans. Attendees will learn the components, maintenance, safeguards, and operational features of exit routes as well as the essential elements of emergency action plans, fire prevention plans, and general fire protection best practices. (3 hours)▲

Watch for Additional Regional Safety Summits Coming to a City Near You!

Waco: July 2015

Austin: August 2015

El Paso: August 2015

Dates and locations TBA

Register!

To register, visit the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/regional.html> or call 512-804-4610. Registration fee is \$50 per person (register five people and get registration for a sixth person free). Registration includes course materials, a compact disc with all four presentations, coffee and afternoon snacks.

Custom Onsite Training

The DWC offers affordable safety training courses that can be delivered onsite to businesses, groups, and trade associations, with priority given to those industries or occupations that experience high incidences of injuries, illnesses and fatalities in Texas.

The DWC offers more than 30 onsite courses, including the following:

Electrical Safety

This program teaches OSHA General Industry 29 CFR 1910.331-335 standards and best practices. Topics include:

- elements of electricity
- hazards of electricity
- protective devices
- fuses
- safe work practices
- equipment use
- testing equipment
- safeguards for personal protection
- conducting electrical inspections

(Length: 1 hour.) Can be delivered via teleconference at no cost. This program may be included in the Safety & Health Outreach Program – General Industry.

The *DWC Training Program Descriptions* guide located on the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/pubs/videoresource/ghsphstrainingp.pdf> provides information on course content and length. The cost for onsite training varies according to the travel costs to the training location. Many courses can be presented at no cost to any business/industry via teleconference or webinar.▲

Book Your Training Class!

To request training, or for more information, call 512-804-4610 or e-mail safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov.

Free OSHA 10-Hour Construction Classes

The DWC offers free OSHA 10-Hour Construction classes in both English and Spanish in Austin, Fort Worth, El Paso, and Houston. Each two-day course is presented by authorized instructors and is designed to train employers and their employees in the essentials of occupational health and safety in construction. Classes cover specific OSHA standards and requirements as they apply to the construction industry and teach safety awareness, which helps in recognizing and reducing the risks of job site hazards. Participants who successfully complete the two-day course will receive an OSHA 10-Hour Construction class completion card within six to eight weeks. ▲

Register!

For additional information on these classes, visit the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/events/index.html>.

Due to limited space, registration is required. To register or for more information on class availability, call 512-804-4610.

Safety DVDs featuring Electrical Safety

The DWC Resource Center contains approximately 4,000 DVDs in its library, including more than 140 titles related to electrical safety. Many titles are available in both English and Spanish. Titles and descriptions of these DVDs can be found under the subject headings *Electrical Safety*.

2012 NFPA 70E: Electrical Safety in the Workplace DVD2872, DVD2872S

"Highlights the hazards of arc flash with dramatic arc flash footage, full-scale explosions and realistic re-enactments of flammable clothing ignition due to arc flash incidents. Explains the critical parts of the 2012 70E standard in detail. Covers qualified

electrical worker requirements, safe working conditions, energized electrical work permits, approach boundaries, arc flash boundaries, and hazard risk categories." 13 min.

Electrical Emergencies: Proper Response DVD1272ES

"Covers the three levels of electric shock, common causes and classifications of fire, and proper first aid measures for victims of shock or smoke inhalation. Reviews emergency procedures and discusses how to extinguish electrical fires." 14 min.

Electrical Grounding: A Vital Precaution DVD1947ES

"Covers proper grounding techniques for employees who work around potentially deadly electrical power. Discusses installing and removing grounds as well as choosing the right equipment for safe work around electrical power." 13 min.

Electrical Safety: Real, Real Life DVD2071ES

"Provides information about safe work practices when working with or around electricity. Covers awareness and attitude, conductivity, personal protective equipment, and using ground-fault circuit interrupters." 13 min.

High-Impact Electrical Safety DVD1786, DVD1786S

"Dramatizes a variety of mistakes that lead to serious injuries. Teaches valuable safety lessons about the dangers of electrical work. Covers the importance of electrical lockout. Reminds employees that communication is vital to electrical work and cautions them to never use defective equipment." 19 min. ▲

Book Your DVDs!

Information on how any Texas employer or employee can check out safety DVDs for free and the DWC Resource Center catalog are available on the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/avcatalog.html>.

DWC, OSHCON, and OSHA Recognize Texas Company with Exemplary Safety Program

The DWC's Occupational Safety and Health Consultation (OSHCON) Program and OSHA recently recognized the following Texas company for its outstanding safety programs with the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) award.



Baptist Memorial Retirement Services (Henley), which employs 35 people at its San Angelo location, offers retirement community services. This company has been granted a one-year exemption from OSHA for planned inspections.

The SHARP award recognizes small, private sector Texas employers for exemplary safety management programs and low incidence rates of work-related injuries and illnesses after participation in the DWC OSHCON program.

OSHCON is a free service designed to help employers understand and comply with OSHA standards through safety consultations conducted by DWC's professional consultants. Benefits for employers participating in the OSHCON program include prevention of work-related injuries and illnesses; confirmation to their employees and customers of their commitment to safety; public acknowledgment of their safety efforts; monetary savings to the company by reducing workers' compensation costs and other costs associated with work-related injuries and illnesses; and protection of company assets such as employees, equipment, supplies, products and facilities.

Employers receiving consultation services from the OSHCON program may be eligible for SHARP status if they have fewer than 250 employees at a worksite and fewer than 500 employees corporate-wide; have operations limited to a fixed worksite; undergo a full-service OSHCON consultation; involve employees in the consultation process; correct all hazards identified by the consultation; and have days away, restricted or transfer (DART) and total case rate (TCR) injury and illness incidence rates below the national average for their industries. ▲

Find Out More About SHARP and OSHCON!

For further information about the OSHCON program and SHARP, call 1-800-687-7080, visit the OSHCON website at <http://www.txoshcon.com>, or e-mail OSHCON@tdi.texas.gov.

OSHA Update

New Educational Resources

Hazards in the Meat Packing Industry

OSHA has updated the webpage on safety and health hazards in the meat packing industry, located on the agency website at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/meatpacking/index.html>. The updated page offers information on protecting employees from exposure to high noise levels, dangerous equipment, slippery floors, musculoskeletal disorders, and hazardous chemicals.

OSHA Updates Guidance for Protecting Healthcare and Social Service Employees from Workplace Violence

In 2013, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported more than 23,000 significant injuries in the United States due to assault at work. More than 70 percent of these assaults were in healthcare and social service settings. OSHA has released an update to its *Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Healthcare and Social Service Workers*, which can be downloaded from the agency website at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/workplaceviolence/index.html>.

The revised guidelines, which update OSHA's 1996 and 2004 guidelines, incorporate research from the last decade into the causes of workplace violence in healthcare and social service settings. It describes risk factors that accompany working with patients or clients who display violent behavior, and the appropriate preventive measures that can be taken, amid the variety of settings in which healthcare and social services employees work. The guidelines also stress the importance of developing a written workplace violence prevention program. The program should include management commitment and employee participation, worksite analysis, hazard prevention and control, safety and health training, and recordkeeping and program evaluation. ▲

Free OSHA Compliance Assistance

The DWC provides a free compliance assistance service for small businesses with fewer than 250 employees at any one facility, and no more than 500 employees nationwide through its OSHCON Program. OSHCON is a non-regulatory program, and its professional safety and health consultants are available to help you identify and eliminate occupational hazards in your workplace, whether or not your company carries workers' compensation insurance. ▲

Find Out More About OSHCON!

For information about the OSHCON program and assistance with OSHA standards, contact the DWC at 1-800-687-7080 or OSHCON@tdi.texas.gov, or visit the OSHCON website at <http://www.txoshcon.com>

Report Unsafe Working Conditions

The DWC Safety Violations Hotline is a bilingual, 24-hour, toll-free telephone line that allows Texas employees to confidentially report unsafe working conditions to the DWC. By law, your employer is responsible for providing a safe work environment for you. While working, you may encounter safety and health hazards that could cause injury, illness or death.

The Safety Violations Hotline allows you, the employee, to take an active role in preventing workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities. After the DWC receives a report of a work-related safety or health issue, its safety inspectors will work with the employer and insurance carrier to help eliminate hazards.

Employers are prohibited by law from retaliation, and may not suspend, terminate the employment of or otherwise discriminate against an employee for using the telephone service to report in good faith an alleged violation of an occupational safety or health law. ▲

Report a Safety Violation

Report workplace safety or health hazards to the Safety Violations Hotline by calling 1-800-452-9595 or use the online form at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/hotline.html>. Reports of violations may be made anonymously.

For questions about workers' compensation claims, call the DWC at 1-800-252-7031. To report other non-safety related workplace issues, contact 2-1-1 Texas by dialing 211 on your telephone for information about how to get in touch with the appropriate agency.

Upcoming Safety Observances

May 1-31

National Electrical Safety Month

May 3-9

North American Occupational Safety & Health Week

May 4-15

National Safety Stand-down to Prevent Falls in Construction

May 17-23

National Dog Bite Prevention Week

May 17-23

Click It or Ticket Campaign

May 20

National Employee Health and Fitness Day

May 27

Heat Awareness Week

May 24-30

Hurricane Preparedness Week

June 1-30

National Safety Month

June 1-July 31

***National Fireworks Safety Month
(also July)***

June 1-7

National CPR & AED Awareness Week

June 1-7

Sun Safety Week

July 1-31

UV Safety Month

August 2-8

National Stop on Red Week

August 19-September 7

Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over

A Proactive Return to Work Process Will help Employers Reduce and Control Workers' Compensation Costs

The longer an injured employee is away from work, the higher an employer's workers compensation and related business costs will be, and the worse the impact of the injury is on the employee.

We often hear about the advantages of early return to work, but seldom hear how to successfully "do" it. Eliminating medically unnecessary lost time by having a procedure allowing and encouraging an injured employee to continue to do productive work while they recover benefits both the employer and the employee. Employers frequently believe that they do not have the time or resources to provide modified work opportunities.

The DWC provides seminars, consultations and a printed guide to help employers develop a process that suits their particular businesses and workforce needs. The information available through the DWC explores work assignment options that may not have been considered in the past. Reducing absences and costly turnover are added bonuses of a return-to-work program.

Assistance from the DWC will help employers:

- Learn how to work more effectively with claims adjusters, since employer involvement is critical in managing costs and reducing lost time;
- Understand their role and the roles of the treating doctor and claims adjuster;
- Learn how to avoid the pitfalls employers often face when attempting to bring injured employees back to work;
- Take the necessary steps to implement a return-to-work program; and
- Make "real" modified job assignments.

By returning injured employees to work while they are recuperating, they will be earning wages instead of collecting benefits that needlessly could drive workers' compensation insurance premiums higher and higher.▲

Download!

Additional information, including the *Making Return to Work - Work - for Your Business and Your Employees guide*, can be found on the agency website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/rtw/index.html>.

Book Your Seminar or Consultation!

To arrange for a seminar or consultation, to receive printed copies of the employer guide, or for additional information, call 512-804-4804 or e-mail pat.crawford@tdi.texas.gov.

CONTACT US!

FREE OSHA COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE

- Occupational Safety and Health Consultation (OSHCON) Program

<http://www.txoshcon.com>

1-800-687-7080

OSHCON@tdi.texas.gov

SAFETY & HEALTH RESOURCES

- Free Safety and Health Publications

<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/index.html>

- Free Audiovisual Loans

<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/avcatalog.html>

512-804-4620

- Safety Training Courses and Seminars

512-804-4610

safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov

- Helpful Safety and Health Resource Links

<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/govunivlinks.html>

DWC RESOURCE CENTER

512-804-4620

ResourceCenter@tdi.texas.gov

OCCUPATIONAL INJURY AND ILLNESS DATA

- Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII)

<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/sis/nonfatalhomepag.html>

512-804-5020

InjuryAnalysis@tdi.texas.gov

- Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI)

<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/sis/fathomepage.html>

512-804-5020

CFOI@tdi.texas.gov

REPORT A SAFETY VIOLATION OR HAZARD

- Safety Violations Hotline

Reports are taken in both English and Spanish and may be made anonymously.

1-800-452-9595

<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/hotline.html>

RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

512-804-5000

<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/rtw/index.html>

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Please forward this newsletter to friends and colleagues interested in preventing workplace injuries and illnesses.

Have a safe day!